The Our Manchester Disability Plan

A strategy to remove barriers and improve opportunities for disabled people of all ages in Manchester

This is a plan to help make Manchester a ‘disabled friendly city’. This means disabled people can:

- Go to the same places
- Do the same things
- Get the same services as people who are not disabled

We think disabled people should be:

- Treated equally
- Able to live independently

It gives “the big picture” it does not say in detail everything we will do.

It is for everyone, young and old, children and adults.
Background: The Our Manchester Strategy

Some of the things in the plan take the best ideas from other work such as ‘The Our Manchester Strategy’. This is a plan the Council have done after talking to people who live here about how to make life better.

We want to help people make changes to their life, which help them to be more independent. We do not start by looking at what is wrong, but seeing what is right, and asking people:

“What matters to you?”

Doing things this way, helps people become more:

- Happy
- Healthy
- Wealthy

This helps them and their family have a good life. Local people and groups can work together to think of new ways of getting public services.

The strategy has been written using the Social Model of Disability. This says anyone with an impairment such as a learning disability or a physical impairment, can be disabled if society has made barriers for them, or does not want to make changes for them. This plan is about how we get rid of these barriers, so we will have a ‘disabled people friendly city’.
12 Pillars of Independent Living
The plan follows the 12 Pillars of Independent Living. These are some of the main things people need to be able to live an independent life.

There has to be enough of the right sort of:
1. Accessible information
2. Money
3. Health and social care provisions
4. Fully accessible transport
5. Full access to the environment
6. Technical aids and equipment
7. Accessible and adapted housing
8. Personal assistance
9. Education and training that is inclusive
10. Equal opportunities for work
11. Independent advocacy and self-advocacy
12. Peer counseling

What people have told us
To make sure this plan gives people what they want and need, we did some workshops with the public and groups who would know a lot about the things we were talking about.
We made a list of some of the main things that affected people:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Staying safe
- Getting off to a good start
- Choice and control
- Independence in your home
- Community opportunities
- Involvement
- Advocacy

We asked people at the workshops:

- What works well?
- What does not work well?

We looked at what people said, wrote a draft plan and asked the public what they thought.

We also asked:

- Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People
- Breakthrough UK
- Manchester Disabled Peoples Access Group
- Manchester Deaf Centre
- Manchester City Council Disabled Staff Group
To help us develop this new plan we asked a lot of disabled people and their parents, other family members and carers, what it is like to live, work, study or visit Manchester.

A lot of people said they felt “Isolated”
Some said life was a “Battle” or a “Fight”

They said they often had to tell different people the same things and said this was:
- “Frustrating”
- “Exhausting”

We also found that some service providers think they are doing things the best way, but some getting the services do not always think so.

Some of the main things adults said they had problems with were:
- Poor access to buildings
- Not being asked early on about design
- Bad attitude of some staff
- Employment
- Further Education
- Staying in work
- Benefit cuts
- Getting a decent place to live
• Lack of accessible places for culture and leisure
• Hate Crime and other sorts of crime
• Transport
• Attitudes in health and social care
• Accessible up-to-date information on where to get help
• Too much bureaucracy

People mainly told us about problems, but there were also some good things.

Good for adults
Adults told us about ways things had got better such as access to buildings and transport.

“Stagecoach buses respond to feedback straight away and change things. They do disability training for drivers. Inspectors check that the journey is OK and whether you have any problems.”

Some of the other good things we were told about:
• Regular checks from GPs and other medical services
• Supported employment schemes
• Accessing mainstream education
• Staying in employment
• Housing and adaptations
• Carers’ services
• Proactive support from social workers and social housing providers
• Positive attitudes and good experiences from police, health, education and housing providers.
• How some organisations work together to make better services.

Some of the support people got from the voluntary and community sector, disabled children and adult’s organisations and public services works really well. People said:

“Being a member of voluntary groups, such as Manchester Disabled Access Group, gives support, confidence and motivation. It gives people a role, a task, and a job – it gives people a sense of purpose.”

“Voluntary work provides positive experience.”

“Local police officers are good – we have a good relationship and I can talk to them.”

What Children and Young People told us

Children and young people tell us they want the same things as any other young person:

• A job
• Friends
• Good social life
• Living independently
• Eventually to have a partner

One young person told us:

“I just want to go to the match with my mates without someone who looks like my Aunty Sheila trotting behind me – I want a befriender that looks like a mate.”

They told us about some of the barriers that stop them having the sort of life they want, such as:

• Lack of access
• Decent places to live
• Negative attitudes and lack of awareness
• Assuming things about their ability
• Poor access to information
• Too much bureaucracy
• Poor communication
• Poor planning (at all levels)
• Lack of opportunities for young disabled people
• Parents worrying too much to let us out on their own

Some of the things children and young people told us:

“Assessments are clipboard exercises and staff do not listen to people. Assessments are sometimes done over the phone.” and:

“We have to tell our story over and over again! We should only have to tell it once.”

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Some Disabled Children and Adults told us they have been the victims of hate crime, but not reported it, because they feel think it is not taken seriously, or the police do not understand the impact it has one them.

“I don’t feel able to talk to the police, they don’t listen.”

“Doctors (and other professionals) don’t talk to the patient, they talk to the carer.”

One person said:
“The Carer’s Forum is a great service. It supports us and keeps us informed about what I am entitled to.”

But someone else said:
“There isn’t enough support for older carers.”

One person summed up a lot when they said:
“It’s all about having the confidence to speak up.”

After we found out what disabled people and organisations thought about our draft plan and other things, we tried to put as many of their ideas into the plan as we could.

To make the plan work, we need to do more with disabled people themselves, their parents, other family members, carers and disabled people’s organisations and all organisations that support or give services.
We need to work with other organisations that give health care, transport, or housing, or ones that offer training or jobs. Their services might be for people who live, work, study in Manchester or are visiting the city.

The plan is something everyone in Manchester can help to make happen. Thinking of how to make things more ‘disabled friendly’, should be a normal part of the way things are done.

The plan will use laws we already have, such as the Care Act and the Equality Act 2010, to help disabled people more.

It will also help the Council to use policies it already has.

We will look for ‘best practice’. This is where someone is doing something in a really good way that other people can learn from.

**Partnership Board**

To make sure things get better, we have set up a Partnership Board. This is a group of people from all the main groups that support people in Manchester and representatives of disabled people. It meets regularly to see that The Our Manchester Disability Plan is working.
The Board is Co-chaired by the main Manchester City Councillor with responsibility for Disability Issues and an independent disabled person.

**Engagement Group**
There is an Engagement Group. This is made up of disabled people. They work with the Partnership Board and make sure the views and experiences of disabled people are taken into account.

**Research, Data and Policy Group**
This group looks at information that can help the Partnership Board and the subgroups. This group is really important because of there should be “nothing about us without us.”

This Our Manchester Disability Plan does not go into a lot of detail about the work that will be done. That is what the Partnership Board and the Engagement Group does.

But we will always be looking at the views of disabled children and adults, as well as new information.

**Workstreams**
Workstreams will look at one part of the work and see what needs to be done and how it can be done.
The first ones we have set up are looking at:

- Transport
- Health and Social Care
- Disabled Children and Young People
- Work and Skills

Workstreams are how partners will work the actions into plans and then work with partners to deliver the plans.

We want the Workstreams to be as close to the 12 Pillars of Independent Living as possible and will set up more Workstreams as we go on.

As we do different parts of the work, the actual people and groups who are part of the Workstreams may change. But they will be from these sorts of groups:

- Other Council directorates and departments
- Disabled Children and Adult’s organisations
- The AADS Engagement Group
- Voluntary organisations, third sector groups and charities
- Health services, including GPs, community health organisations, hospitals and public health services
- Greater Manchester Police
- Manchester Strategic Housing Partnership and social and private housing providers and developers.
• Transport for Greater Manchester
• Leisure providers in the city
• Employers and businesses
• Education including schools, colleges and training
• Individual disabled people

Writing this plan is the first part of what we need to do.

What we have done
• Set up the Partnership Board and Engagement Group
• Do a list of things they need to do in their first year.
• Seen what resources we can get to support work for the plan.

We hope you can help us make the plan work and make Manchester a disabled friendly city.
If you have any questions about the plan, or want to help make it happen, please get in touch by phone:

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